

THE  
**MUSICAL WORLD,**  
A WEEKLY RECORD OF  
**Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.**

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To know the cause why music was ordained;  
Was it not to refresh the mind of man,  
After his studies or his usual pain?  
Then give me leave to read philosophy,  
And, while I pause, serve in your harmony.  
TAMING OF THE SHREW.

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**PROFESSIONAL MEMORANDA OF THE LATE MR.  
SAMUEL WESLEY'S LIFE.**

IN announcing the death of this eminent musician, in our last number, it was stated that he was born on the 24th Feb. 1766, the same day and month which gave birth to Handel; and that he died on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 11th inst. at about twenty minutes after four o'clock. Mr. Wesley was born at Bristol, and was the son of the Rev. Charles Wesley, brother to John, and who were the celebrated founders of the Methodists. Both Samuel, and his brother Charles, the late organist of Marylebone, in the New Road, were remarkable for a precocious and extraordinary developement of musical genius. At the age of three years the subject of our present notice could both play and even extemporize freely upon the organ; and before he was five years old, he had taught himself to write a print hand from a close study of the oratorio of Samson, the whole of which he had committed to memory. To the very last his autograph retained this peculiar character; so that his letters bore all the appearance of being written with much difficulty. A very interesting account of his juvenile performances was published in the Hon. Daines Barrington's Miscellanies. The following extract relates to Samuel only, but there are full particulars of both the brothers. The first part is an account communicated by his father.

The seeds of harmony did not spring up in him quite so early as in his brother; for he was three years old before he aimed at a tune.\* His first were, 'God save great George our King;' Fischer's minuet, and such like; mostly picked up from the street organs. He did not put a true bass to them till he had learned his notes.

While his brother was playing, he used to stand by, with his childish fiddle, scraping and beating time. One observing him, asked me "And what shall this boy do?" I answered, "Mend his brother's pens;" alluding to the well-

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\* In contradiction to this statement, his mother produced a quarter-guinea which had been given to him for playing a tune when he was but two years and eleven months old. Mrs. Wesley had an elder son, who died in his infancy; and who at the age of twelve months could sing a tune and beat the time.

known reply of Marcello's elder brother; who when the same question was put, said; "Let him mend my pens." The boy was so much piqued at it, that he determined to exceed his elder brother. Samuel, however, did not resent the affront so deeply as young Marcello; so it was not indignation which made him a musician.

Mr. Arnold was the first, who hearing him at the harpsichord, said, "I set down Sam for one of my family." But we did not much regard him, coming after Charles. The first thing which drew our attention was, the great delight he took in hearing his brother play. Whenever Mr. Kelway came to teach him, Sam constantly attended, and accompanied Charles *on the chair*. Undaunted by Mr. Kelway's frown, he went on; and when he did not see the harpsichord\* he crossed his hands on the chair, as the other on the instrument, without ever missing a time.

He was so excessively fond of Scarlatti, that if Charles ever began playing his lesson before Sam was called, he would cry and roar as if he had been beat. Mr. Madan his godfather finding him so belabouring the chair, told him, "He should have a better instrument by and bye."

I have since recollected Mr. Kelway's words: "It is of the utmost importance to a learner to hear the best music." And, "If any man would learn to play well, let him hear Charles." Sam had this double advantage from his birth. As his brother employed the evenings in Handel's oratorios, Sam was always at his elbow, listening and joining with his voice. Nay, he would sometimes presume to find fault with his playing, when we thought he could know nothing of the matter.

He was between four and five years old when he got hold of the oratorio of 'Samson,' and by that alone taught himself to read words: soon after he taught himself to write. From this time he sprang up like a mushroom, and when turned of five he could read perfectly well; and had all the airs, recitatives, and choruses of 'Samson' and the 'Messiah,' both words and notes, by heart.

Whenever he heard his brother begin to play, he would tell us whose music it was (whether Handel, Corelli, Scarlatti, or any other) and at what part of what lesson, sonata, or overture.

Before he could write he composed much music. His custom was to lay the words of an oratorio before him, and sing them all over. Thus he set (extempore for most part) 'Ruth,' 'Gideon,' 'Manasses,' and the 'Death of Abel.' We observed, when he repeated the same words, it was always to the same tunes. The airs of 'Ruth' in particular, he made before he was six years old, laid them up in his memory till he was eight, and then wrote them down. I have seen him open his prayer book, and sing the 'Te Deum,' or an anthem from some psalm, to his own music, accompanying it with the harpsichord. This he often did, after he had learned to play by note, which Mr. Williams, a young organist of Bristol, taught him between six and seven.

How and when he learned counterpoint I can hardly tell; but without being ever taught it, he soon wrote in parts. He was full eight years old when Dr. Boyce came to see us; and accosted me with, "Sir, I hear you

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\* Note by the Hon. Daines Barrington. Incredible as this may appear, it is attested by the whole family; and that he generally turned his back to his brother while he was playing. I think, however, this extraordinary fact may be thus accounted for. There are some passages in Scarlatti's lessons which require the crossing of hands; but as what calls for this musical fingering produces a very singular effect, the child must have felt that these parts of the composition could not be executed in any other way. It is possible, indeed, that he might have observed his brother crossing his hands at these passages, and imitated him by recollecting they were thus fingered.—We incline to refer it to memory, a gift possessed by Mr. Wesley through life to an astonishing extent.

have got an English Mozart in your house: young Linley\* tells me wonderful things of him." I called Sam, to answer for himself. He had by this time scrawled down his oratorio of 'Ruth.' The Doctor looked over it very carefully, and seemed highly pleased with the performance. Some of his words were: "These airs are some of the prettiest I have seen: this boy writes by nature as true a bass as I can by rule and study. There is no man in England has two such sons," &c. He bade us let him run on *ad libitum*, without any check of rules or masters. After this, whenever the Doctor visited us, Sam ran to him with his song, sonata, or anthem; and the Doctor examined them with astonishing patience and delight.

As soon as Sam had quite finished his oratorio he sent it as a present to the Doctor, who immediately honoured him with the following note:—

"To Mr. Samuel Wesley. Dr. Boyce's compliments and thanks to his very ingenious brother composer, Mr. S. W., and is very much pleased and obliged by the possession of the oratorio of 'Ruth,' which he shall preserve with the utmost care, as the most curious product of his musical library."

For the year that Sam continued under Mr. Williams, it was hard to say which was the master and which the scholar. Sam chose what music he would learn, and often broke out into extempore playing, his master wisely letting him do as he pleased. During this time he taught himself the violin; a soldier assisted him about six weeks; and some time after Mr. Kingsbury gave him twenty lessons. His favourite instrument was the organ. He spent a month at Bath, while we were in Wales; served the Abbey on Sundays, gave them several voluntaries, and played the fiddle in many private concerts.

He returned with us to London greatly improved in his playing. There I allowed him a month for learning all Handel's overtures. He played them over to me in three days. Handel's concertos he learned with equal ease; and some of his lessons and Scarlatti's. Like Charles, he mastered the hardest music without any difficulty. . . .

Mr Madan now began carrying him about to his musical friends. He played several times at Mr. Wesley's, to many of the nobility, and some eminent masters and judges of music. They gave him subjects and music which he had never seen. Mr. Burton, Mr. Bates, &c. expressed their approbation in the strongest terms. His extempore fugues, they said, were just and regular, but could not believe that he knew nothing of the rules of composition.

Several companies he entertained for hours together with his own music. The learned were quite astonished. Sir John Hawkins cried out, "Inspiration! inspiration!" Dr. Cooke candidly acknowledged, "He has got that which we are searching after," although at first out of pure good-nature he had refused to give him a subject. An old musical gentleman on hearing him could not refrain from tears.

Dr. Burney was greatly pleased with his extempore play, and his pursuing the subjects and fugues he gave him; but insisted, like the rest, that he must have been taught the rules. . . .

An organist gave him a sonata he had just written, not easy, nor very legible; Sam played it with great readiness and propriety, and better (as the composer owned to Mr. Madan) than he could himself. . . . Whatever was presented he played at sight, and made variations on any tune: and as often as he played it again made new variations. He imitated every author's style, whether Bach (John Christian), Handel, Schobert, or Scarlatti himself.

One showed him some of Mozart's music, and asked him how he liked it.

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\* This Linley was the favourite playfellow of Mozart, who used to call him "Tomasino." He was brother to the late Mr. William Linley, author of the 'Shakspeare Songs,' and met an early death by drowning. He was a very promising genius.—Ed. M. W.

He played it over, and said, "It was very well for one of his years." He played to Mr. Kelway, whom I afterwards asked what he thought of him. He would not allow him to be comparable to Charles; yet commended him greatly, and told his mother, "It was a gift from heaven to both her sons; and as for Sam, he never in his life saw so free and dégagé a gentleman." Mr. Madan had often said the same: "that Sam was everywhere as much admired for his behaviour as for his play." \* \* \* If he loved anything better than music, it was regularity. He took to it himself. Nothing could exceed his punctuality. No company, no persuasion, could keep him up beyond his time. He never could be prevailed on to hear any opera or concert by night. The moment the clock gave warning for eight, away ran Sam, in the midst of his most favourite music. Once in the play-house he rose up after the first part of the Messiah with, "Come, Mamma, let us go home; I shan't be in bed by eight." When some talked of carrying him to the Queen, and asked him if he was willing to go,—“Yes, with all my heart; (he answered) but I won't stay beyond eight.”

The praises bestowed so lavishly upon him, did not seem to affect, much less to hurt him; and whenever he went into the company of his betters, he would much rather have stayed at home: yet when among them, he was free and easy; so that some remarked, "he behaved as one bred up at court, yet without a courtier's servility."

On our coming to town this last time, he sent Dr. Boyce the last anthem he had made. The Doctor thought, from its correctness, that Charles must have helped him in it; but Charles assured him that he never assisted him, otherwise than by telling him, if he asked, whether such or such a passage were good harmony; and the Doctor was so scrupulous, that when Charles showed him an improper note, he would not suffer it to be altered. Mr. Madan now carried him to more of the first masters. Mr. Abel wrote him a subject, and declared, "Not three masters in town could have answered it so well." Mr. Cramer, (father to J. B. and François) took a great liking to him, offered to teach him the violin, and played some trios with Charles and him. He sent a man to take measure of him for a fiddle; and is confident a very few lessons would set him up for a violinist. Sam often played the second, and sometimes the first fiddle, with Mr. Treadway, who declared, "Giardini himself could not play with greater exactness."

Mr. Madan brought Dr. Nares to my house, who could not believe that a boy could write an oratorio, play at sight, and pursue any given subject. He brought two of the King's boys, who sang several songs and choruses in Ruth. Then he produced two bars of a fugue. Sam worked this fugue very readily and well, adding a movement of his own; and then a voluntary on the organ, which quite removed the Doctor's incredulity.

At the rehearsal at St. Paul's, Dr. Boyce met "his brother" Sam; and showing him to Dr. Hayes told him, "This boy will soon surpass you all." Shortly after he came to see us, took up a Jubilate which Sam had lately wrote, and commended it as one of Charles's: when we told him whose it was, he declared he could find no fault in it, adding, "There was not another boy upon earth who could have composed this;" and concluding with, "I never yet met with that person who owes so much to nature as Sam. He is come among us, dropt from heaven."

The following extract comprises the whole of what the Hon. Daines Barrington himself witnessed in the performances of the little Wesley.

"I first had an opportunity of being witness of Master Samuel Wesley's great musical talents at the latter end of 1775, when he was nearly ten years old.

"To speak of him first as a performer on the harpsichord: he was then

able to execute the most difficult lessons for the instrument at sight, for his fingers never wanted the guidance of the eye in the most rapid and desultory passages. But he not only did ample justice to the composition in neatness and precision, but entered into its true taste, which may be easily believed by the numbers who have heard him play extemporary lessons in the style of most of the eminent masters. He not only executed crabbed compositions thus at sight, but was equally ready to transpose into any keys, even a fourth;\* and if it was a sonata for two trebles and a bass, the part of the first treble being set before him, he would immediately add an extemporary bass and second treble to it. Having happened to mention this readiness in the boy to Bremner (the printer of music in the Strand), he told me that he had some lessons which were supposed to have been composed for Queen Elizabeth; but which none of the harpsichord masters could execute, and would consequently gravel the young performer. I however desired that he would let me carry one of these compositions to him by way of trial, which I accordingly did, when the boy immediately placed it upon his desk, and was sitting down to play it; but I stopped him, by mentioning the difficulties he would soon encounter, and that therefore he must cast his eye over the music before he made the attempt. Having done this very rapidly (for he is a devourer of a score, and conceives at once the effect of the different parts), he said that Bremner was in the right, for that there were two or three passages which he could not play at sight, as they were so queer and awkward, but that he had no notion of not trying; and though he boggled at these parts of the lesson he executed them cleanly at the second practice. I then asked how he approved of the composition? to which he answered, 'not at all, though he might differ from a queen; and that attention had not been paid to some of the established rules.' He then pointed out the particular passages to which he objected, and I stated them to Bremner, who allowed that the boy was right; but that some of the great composers had occasionally taken the same liberties.

"The next time I saw Master Wesley, I mentioned Bremner's defence to what he had blamed; on which he immediately answered, 'that when such excellent rules were broken, the composer should take care that these licences produced a good effect; whereas these passages had a very bad one.' I need not dwell on the great penetration, acuteness, and judgment, of this answer. Lord Mornington, indeed, (who hath so deep a knowledge of music) hath frequently told me, that he always wished to consult Master Wesley upon any difficulty in composition; as he knew no one who gave so immediate and satisfactory information.

"Though he was always willing to play the compositions of others, yet for the most part he amused himself with extemporary effusions of his own most extraordinary musical inspiration, which unfortunately were totally forgotten in a few minutes; whereas his memory was most tenacious of what had been published by others. His invention in varying passages was inexhaustible; and I have myself heard him give more than fifty variations on a known melody, all of which were not only different from each other, but showed excellent taste and judgment.

"This infinite variety probably arose from his having played so much extempore, in which he gave full scope to every flight of his imagination, and produced passages which I never heard from any other performer on the harpsichord. The readiness of his fingering what was most difficult to be

\* Most musicians, when they transpose, conceive the succession of notes to be written in a cleff in which they have been used to practise, as the bass cleff, tenor cleff, &c., but the transposition of a 4th belongs to no cleff, except that which the Italians term the Mezzo Soprano, or an intermediate cleff between the treble and countertenor, and which, not being ever marked in our compositions, cannot be fancied by an English performer when he is obliged to transpose a fourth.

executed on the instrument, and in the only proper manner, was equal to *his* musical fancy; of which I will mention the following proof:—since the comic Italian operas have been performed in England, there is frequently a passage in the bass which consists of a single note, to be perhaps repeated for two or three bars, at quick and equal intervals, and which cannot be effected on the harpsichord by one finger, as any common musician would attempt to do, but requires a change of two. I laid an opera song before Master Wesley with such a passage, and happening to be at the other end of the room when he came to this part of the composition, I knew from the execution that he must have made use of such a change of two fingers, the necessity of which that eminent professor of music Dr. Burney had shown me. On this I asked him from whom he had learnt the method of fingering; to which his answer was, ‘from no one; but that it was impossible to play the passage with the proper effect in any other manner.’

“In his extemporary compositions he frequently hazarded bold and uncommon modulations; so that I have seen that most excellent musician Mr. Charles Wesley (his elder brother\*) tremble for him, Sam however always extricated himself from the difficulties in which he appeared to be involved, in the most masterly manner, being always possessed of that serene confidence which a thorough knowledge inspires, though surrounded by musical professors, who could not deem it arrogance.

“And here I will give a proof of the goodness of his heart, and delicacy of his feelings:—I desired him to compose an easy melody in the minor third, for an experiment on little Crotch, and that he would go with me to hear what that very extraordinary child was capable of. Crotch was not in good humour, and Master Wesley submitted, amongst other things, to play upon a crack’d violin, in order to please him; the company however having found out who he was, pressed him very much to play upon the organ, which Sam constantly declined. As this was contrary to his usual readiness in obliging any person who had curiosity to hear him, I asked him afterwards what might be the occasion of his refusal; when he told me, ‘that he thought it would look like wishing to shine at little Crotch’s expense.’

“Every one knows, that any material alteration in the construction of an organ, which varies the position of certain notes, must at first, embarrass the player, though a most expert one. I carried Sam, however, to the Temple organ, which hath quarter notes, with the management of which he was as ready, as if he had made use of such an instrument all his life. I need scarcely say how much more difficult it must be to play passages which must be executed, not by the fingers, but the feet. Now the organ at the Savoy hath a complete octave of pedals, with the half-notes; on which part Sam appeared as little a novice as if he had been accustomed to it for years. Nay, he made a very good and regular *shake on the pedals*, by way of experiment, for he had too much taste and judgment to suppose that it would have a good effect.

“He was able to sing at sight (which commonly requires so much instruction with those even who are of a musical disposition) from the time of first knowing his notes; his voice was by no means strong, and it cannot yet be pronounced how it may turn out; his more favourite songs were those of Handel, composed for a bass voice, as ‘Honour and Arms,’† &c.

\* “Mr. Charles Wesley hath composed some singular pieces for two organs, which would have great merit if performed by others, but have still more so when executed by the two brothers, as they are so well acquainted with each other’s manner of playing, and are so amazingly accurate in the precision of their time. Such as have heard the two Platts in duets for the hautbois, may well conceive the effect of these compositions from the Wesleys.

† “Having heard him sing, ‘Return, O God of Hosts!’ and an Italian air, since this sheet was in the press, I can now venture to pronounce, that his voice is a pleasing countertenor, and that his manner is excellent. Without any practice also he hath acquired an even and brilliant shake.”

"He hath lately practised much upon the violin, on which he bids fair for being a most capital performer. Happening one day to find him thus employed, I asked him how long he had played that morning; his answer was, 'three or four hours; which Giardini had found necessary.' The delicacy of his ear is likewise very remarkable, of which I shall give an instance or two:—having been at Bach's concert, he was much satisfied both with the compositions and performers; but said, 'the musical pieces were ill arranged, as four had been played successively which were all in the same key.' He was desired to compose a march for one of the regiments of guards; which he did to the approbation of all who ever heard it, and a distinguished officer of the royal navy declared, that it was a movement which would probably inspire steady and serene courage, when the enemy was approaching. As I thought the boy would like to hear this march performed, I carried him to the parade at the proper time, when it had the honour of beginning the military concert. The piece being finished, I asked him whether it was executed to his satisfaction? to which he replied, 'by no means;' and I then immediately introduced him to the band (which consisted of very tall and stout musicians), that he might set them right. On this, Sam immediately told them, 'that they had not done justice to his composition.' To which they answered the urchin with both astonishment and contempt, by 'your composition!' Sam, however, replied with great serenity, 'yes, my composition!' which I confirmed. They then stared, and severally made their excuses, by protesting, that they had copied accurately from the manuscript which had been put into their hands. This he most readily allowed to the hautbois and bassoons, but said it was the French horns who were in fault; who making the same defence, he insisted upon the original score being produced, and showing them their mistake, ordered the march to be played again, which they submitted to with as much deference as they would have shown to Handel. This concert of wind instruments begins on the parade at about five minutes after nine, and ends at five minutes after ten, when the guards proceed to St. James's. I stayed with him till this time; and asked him what he thought of the concluding movement, which he said deserved commendation; but that it was very injudicious to make it the finishing piece, because as it must necessarily continue till the clock of the Horse-guards had struck ten, it should have been recollected that the tone of the clock did not correspond with the key-note of the march.

"I shall now attempt to give some account of this most extraordinary boy considered as a composer, and first of his extemporary flights. If left to himself when he played on the organ, there were oftener traces of Handel's style than any other master, and if on the harpsichord, of Scarlatti; at other times however his voluntaries were original and singular. After he had seen or heard a few pieces\* of any composer, he was fully possessed of his peculiarities, which, if at all striking, he could instantly imitate at the word of command, as well as the general flow and turn of the composition. Thus I have heard him frequently play extemporary lessons, which, without prejudice to their musical names, might have been supposed to have been those of Abel, Vento, Schobert, and Bach.†

"But he not only entered into the style of the harpsichord-masters, but that of solo players on other instruments. I once happened to see some music wet upon his desk, which he told me was a solo for a trumpet. I then asked him if he had heard Fischer on the hautboy, and would compose an extemporary

\* "I asked him once to imitate Lord Kelly's style, which he declined, as he had never heard any composition of his lordship's, except the overture to the *Maid of the Mill*, which he highly approved of, however, for its brilliancy and boldness."

† "He would as readily compose a song proper for the serious or comic opera, the instant it was requested, particularly the airs of Handel for a bass voice."

solo, proper for him to execute. To this Sam readily assented, but found his little legs too short for reaching the swell of the organ, without which the imitation could not have its effect. I then proposed to touch the swell myself, on his giving me the proper signals; but to this he answered, 'That I could neither do this so instantaneously as was requisite, nor should I give the greater or less force of the swell (if a note was dwelt upon) which would correspond with his feelings.' Having started this difficulty, however, he soon suggested the remedy, which was the following: He stood upon the ground with his left foot, whilst his right rested upon the swell, and thus literally played an extemporary solo, 'Stans pede in uno;' the three movements of which must have lasted not less than ten minutes; and every bar of which Fischer might have acknowledged as his own. Every one who hath heard that capital musician must have observed a great singularity in his cadences, in the imitation of which Sam succeeded as perfectly as in the other parts of the composition. After this I have been present when he hath executed thirty or forty different solos for the same instrument, totally almost varied the one from the other, to the astonishment of several audiences, and particularly so to that eminent performer on the hautboy Mr. Simpson.

"Having found that the greater part of those who heard him would not believe but that his voluntaries had been practised before, I always endeavoured that some person present (and more particularly so if he was a professor) should give him the subject upon which he was to work, which always afforded the convincing and irrefragable proof, as he then composed upon the ideas suggested by others, to which ordeal it is believed few musicians in Europe would submit. The more difficult the subject, (as if it was two or three bars of the beginning of a fugue) the more cheerfully he undertook it, as he always knew he was equal to the attempt, be it never so arduous.

"I once carried that able composer Mr. Christopher Smith to the boy, desiring that he would suggest the subject; which Sam not only pursued in a most masterly manner, but fell into a movement of the minor third, which might be naturally introduced. When we left Mr. Wesley's house, Mr. Smith, after expressing his amazement, said that what he had just heard should be a caution to those who are apt to tax composers as plagiarists; for though he had wrote on the same subject, and the music had never been seen by any one, this wonderful boy had almost followed him note by note. Baumgarten found the same, upon a like trial, of what he had never communicated to any one.

"I can refer only to one printed proof of his abilities as a composer, which is a set of eight lessons for the harpsichord, and which appeared in 1777, about the same time that he became so known to the musical world that his portrait was engraved, which is a very strong resemblance. Some of these lessons have passages which are rather too difficult for common performers, and therefore they are not calculated for a general vogue. His father, the Rev. Mr. Wesley, will permit any one to see the score of his Oratorio of Ruth, which he really composed at six years of age, but did not *write* till he was eight; his quickness in thus giving utterance to his musical ideas is amazingly great; and, notwithstanding the rapidity, he seldom makes a blot or a mistake. Numbers of other compositions, and almost of all kinds, may be likewise examined; particularly an anthem to the following words, which I selected for him, and which hath been performed at the Chapel Royal, and St. Paul's: '1. O Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry at the prayer of thy people? 2. Turn thee again, O Lord, and we shall be saved! 3. For thou art a great God, and a great King above all gods.' The first part of this anthem was composed for a single tenor; the second a duet for two boys; and the third a chorus."

Before he attained his majority, Mr. Wesley had become an excel-



lent classical scholar; his knowledge of Greek, as we have heard, being little inferior to that of many professors of the language. The early precision of his habits recorded by his father, seems never to have forsaken him in after-life; for however late the hour of his retiring from a convivial party, he uniformly rose early; and his usual hour was five o'clock. He had an iron constitution, and encountered with impunity what would have destroyed almost any other man. To the accident alluded to in the notices of his life published in the papers the day after his death (that of a contusion on the head from a fall) is to be attributed mainly, if not wholly, those aberrations deplored by the admirers of his astonishing genius. We pass them by, our object being merely to record the few memoranda we have collected of his professional career and habits.

Mr. Wesley was, we should guess, rather below the middle size in stature; his features bearing a strong resemblance to those of his eminent uncle. His general frame was delicate, his hands and feet being small and the former very handsome. When composing, it was his custom to stand at a high desk, and so constant indeed was his habit of remaining in an erect position, that he may be said never to have sat down at breakfast, and rarely at dinner, when in his own house. So restless was his habit both of mind and body, that he required constant employment, and this it was the business of those about him to supply. When composing, so great was his power of abstraction, that he could go on writing while people around him were talking. Upon such occasions, the utmost he has been known to do, was to put his fingers in his ears for a few seconds, till he had recovered the thread of his thought, and then proceed to the end of it without pausing. In composing he was remarkable for rapidity, at the same time his MS. remained clear, without blot. The thoughts seem perfect in themselves. So prompt, decided, and firm, was he in resolve, that having finished a composition he rarely found occasion for amendment. And having once begun, he never rested till he had come to a conclusion, but continued writing till four and five in the morning. Upon one of these occasions the family, previously to retiring to bed, had procured him a pewter pot of porter which he set upon the bar in front of the fire. Having then set to work he became so absorbed in his subject, that not only did he not remember his porter, but he was totally unconscious that the liquor had all evaporated and run out from the heat of the fire, the pewter itself being melted, and found next morning in the ashes under the grate.

Like Mozart, Wesley wrote many of his compositions under circumstances of the severest domestic distress. His voluntary in E flat, No. 7, was composed at such a juncture; and the introduction to this, is perhaps one of the most exquisite and pathetic movements he ever wrote. All his principal compositions were written before he had attained the mid station in life. His 'Ode to St. Cecilia's Day,' he composed soon after he was of age. The 'Confitebor,' bears date 1799. Both these works were written before he had become acquainted with Sebastian Bach. This event in his life did not take place till he was thirty-five years old; and from that time his compositions assumed a different feature. The 'In exitu Israel;' 'Dixit Dominus;' 'Exultate

Deo; 'Litany;' 'Morning and Evening Service;' and 'Gregorian Mass;' were all written after the above-named period. The work on which he himself rested his fame was the 'Confitebor.' The 'Omnia vanitas' (Carmen funebre), words repeated to him by his father on his death bed, was written after the change in his style. The 'Tu es sacerdos' he observed had been treated by all great musicians; nevertheless he would try what he could do; and we have no hesitation in asserting that he has equalled certainly, if not beaten the best. This should be the first of his compositions taken up by choral societies: it is short; and he has also adapted English words to it. Immediately after writing this, he sent it to Dr. Crotch, who, on the receipt of it, wrote him a delightful letter; and which, we regret to say, is supposed to have been destroyed. In November, 1827, Mr. Moscheles sent him his album, which contains the handwriting of almost every great musician, living and dead. At supper his son said: "Father, I hope you will write something very nice; and take time about it." With his characteristic opposition, Wesley answered: "Indeed I shall do no such thing!" And upon the instant, while he was eating, he wrote off without a single hesitation a very beautiful melody. It is quite in the modern style, and, in short, displays much of the feeling of Mozart. He would say: "In writing, I always strive to get a good melody; and then I know all is right." In elegance of melody, however, he thought his brother Charles exceeded him, and indeed almost all other musicians. He used to call them "Fairy melodies."

From his extraordinary power in sarcasm, and indifference as to its after effect upon himself, he not only created many enemies, but a prevailing opinion that he contemned his brother professors. This is a mistake. Whatever were Mr. Wesley's faults, he was not envious. He cared little indeed for the feelings of pretenders: but even mediocrity, without assumption, was frequently treated by him with forbearance if not kindness. Of Dr. Busby, who is still alive, and is, we believe, his senior by ten years, he said, that his oratorio of "Prophecy," performed at the Haymarket, in 1799, contained some very fine choruses, and that one of them would have done honour to Handel.

Of John Cramer's genius he always spoke in high terms; and when his studies came out, he made himself master of them at once. When that illustrious pianist left England, he addressed a beautiful song to him entitled 'Farewell.'

Of Dr. Crotch he always spoke most highly. The only fault he found in his 'Palestine' was, that he *had done too much with the choruses*; that, from his exclusiveness, and habit of seclusion, he had overlaid them.

The first time he was introduced to Adams was at a private party: who upon being requested to perform, played one of his own fugues—the one in F minor, we believe, of six which were afterwards published. When Adams had finished, Wesley went up to him and said: "I forget which of Bach's fugues that is:" and when he found it was Adams's own, he expressed himself highly delighted.

Woeß, the favourite pupil of Mozart, and who left Germany because the people could not bear two musicians in the same school, was also a favourite with Wesley. Salomon used to be fond of bringing them to-

gether and giving them subjects to treat. He played an air extempore, and Wesley and Woelfl would alternately put variations to it.

Kelway, the tutor of his brother, and so excellent an organist, that Handel often went to St. Martin's in the Fields, to hear him play, Wesley spoke of in high terms. Kelway died in great distress. At nine years of age, Wesley wrote a complimentary song upon him, and lately, when playing it over, the similarity of their situations presented itself so forcibly to his mind, and so affected him, that he was unable to finish.

Of Pinto, the extraordinary young genius, and who was carried off in the prime of life, he spoke in terms amounting to rapture, pronouncing him the Mozart of this country. It was Pinto who introduced him to the compositions of Sebastian Bach : but it was the father of Charles Horn who gave him a copy of the fugues ; and on this account he put Horn's name on the title-page of his own edition of them. He was thirty-five years old when he sat down to study that master ; a somewhat remarkable circumstance in a person of his temperament, and at that time of life. After he had mastered the fugues, the difficulty was to make people take to them, on account of the prejudice raised against them by Dr. Burney in his History, and Tour in Germany. (Vide Vols. 3 & 4 of the former work.) Wesley thought his only plan was to go at once to Burney, and play them to him. When he finished, Burney said, " I have been both mistaken and misled. The copies I have are not like these." And it turned out that the MSS. he had purchased in Germany were so imperfectly copied that nothing could be made of them. From that day Burney retracted the opinion he had pronounced upon Bach. Dr. Crotch, who had imbibed the same idea with Burney, also retracted : and in a letter to Wesley said, " you are right ; Bach was the greatest musician that ever lived." Upon more than one occasion Dr. Crotch, like a truly great man, has displayed the same noble candour.

Of Battishill and Worgan he always expressed himself in warm praise, and would take subjects from them for his voluntaries. Mendelssohn he was very anxious to hear ; and on his way to Christchurch the other day, he said to his daughter who accompanied him, " do you say this man plays more finely than Adams ? I think Adams has the finest finger in Europe." She answered ; " he is considered to play more in your style than that of any other organist ; and I hope you will play too." " I will do as well as I can, (was his reply) I have thought of my subject." When Mendelssohn began, Wesley turned round and said, " this is transcendent playing ! do you think I dare venture after this ?" And every now and then, between his groans and mutterings, he continued to ejaculate " great ! — great ! — what mind !" Upon Mendelssohn's complimenting him upon his own performance, he shook his head, smiling, " Ah Sir ! you have not heard me play. You should have heard me forty years ago." Afterwards, when a friend asked him if he did not think Mendelssohn a " fine player ?" his reply was, " Sir, that is not the term. He is a *very great* player."

We have spoken of his talent in sarcasm. To him is attributable the well-known reply, as to whether Sir Wm. Parsons was knighted upon " the score of his merit." " I am sure (said he) it could not be upon the *merit* of his score."

Of another professor he said, his genius was like a *patent sky-rocket*, it would go any way but *up*." Of his talent in teaching he would say, "I do not like teaching, because I have not studied music regularly as I ought to have done; and therefore I have no method as my brother has." He regretted that he had neglected to study under Kelway; but Wesley's conversation was more useful to the student than any lesson could be; and he would communicate without reserve all that was asked of him. And if in his extempore playing anything struck his hearer; or a passage, the intention of which he did not immediately follow, he would play it over and over again; and then say, "now have you got it?"—but in staid, dogged teaching, he would become very impatient from the cause assigned. It was complained to him that a young lady, his pupil, made no progress. He desired to see the mother, and then said, "Madam, I am paid to teach your daughter, not to find her brains; that I am incapable of doing." Upon one occasion, when an acquaintance had played a sequence which pleased him, he took it up, and for a full half-hour, varied it in every possible way.

We have already spoken of his constant craving for occupation. This was a principle with him; and he would at times quote the axiom of Dr. Johnson, "Action, sir, action!—*wishing* is of all things the most unprofitable."

When Cimador came over to this country he thought very little of the English performers; and at the Glee Club, when alluding to them, observed, "You have not one that can play upon a subject extempore." A gentleman present offered a wager—a heavy one, that he would find a young man who should play upon any subject that he might put before him. The bet was taken, and Wesley was the "young man" pitched upon. After dinner, Cimador was asked to name his subject, and he wrote a double chromatic subject in E flat. Wesley requested leave to retire for a few minutes, but returned almost instantaneously. He sat down to the instrument and played in so extraordinary a manner that Cimador soon relinquished his wager.

Wesley has often declared that he never read a theoretical treatise on music. He had dipped into several, but had never gone through any one of them.

Of the two brothers, Charles had the neater finger, and in rapid passages was the superior player: but he was no master of the pedals; and indeed he would say, "Let those who cannot use their hands, play with their feet;" which was a lame apology, even for his deficiency. In conversation, they were the two extremes. Charles had not a word to say for himself; Samuel was full of anecdote, fluent, pointed, and eloquent. Both were men of singular simplicity of mind; and Samuel was credulous to an incredible degree. An anecdote is related of Charles Wesley, corroborating his simplicity of character. We have it upon the authority of an old pupil. He especially prided himself upon the grace with which he could make a bow; and this courtly accomplishment he has practised for half an hour before the glass, with an opera hat under his arm; every now and then appealing to his scholar at the harpsichord: "I say C. that will do for His Majesty, I think." No passage in Scarlatti was more particularly fingered than his right and left slide, and deliberately profound dorsal

depression. George IV, when Prince Regent, sent for Charles to play to him. Upon being introduced at Carlton House, Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, (no friend to the worthy musician,) knowing him to be short-sighted, played him the following hoax. In a room of the suite through which he was to pass, were several Mandarin figures, the size of life; their heads so contrived that they would bow when put in motion. In passing through the apartment Charles mistook these congeeing worthies to be personages of the court; with his own peculiar grace, therefore, he stood reciprocating their courtesies all the way through the room. The Prince hearing of the impertinent trick put upon *his* visitor, and a man of talent too, was very angry, and sharply rebuked the author of it.

(*To be concluded.*)

### CHIT CHAT FROM THE CONTINENT.

*Kalkbrenner.*—The Duchess of Orleans, herself an accomplished pianoforte player, and skilful musician, has appointed Kalkbrenner her musical instructor. A second part of his Pianoforte School, which is to contain easy studies for four hands, is announced for immediate publication.

*Hague.*—The Society for the encouragement of music in Holland, of whose labours in the cause of the art, we have had occasion to make frequent mention in the pages of the Musical World, have recently published two compositions by members of the Society, which are not only interesting on account of their merits, but also as showing the state of musical composition in that country at the present time. The first is a Mass, by J. G. Berletmann, displaying considerable talent, and the second is a 'Tantum ergo,' composed by J. J. H. Verhulst, and which holds forth promise of future excellence, in no small degree.

*New Operas.*—New operas in Italy appear to be "as plenty as blackberries." Every city of note in that land of song may just now boast of having produced a new one. In Ferrara there is 'L'Amor Molinaro,' composed by Lappelletti: in Genoa, an 'Adelisa,' by Degola:—in Verona, one by Candio, entitled 'The Duel':—in Venice, one composed by Levi, under the title of 'Iginia d'Asti':—in Naples, 'Vindlinda,' composed by Raimondi; and finally, in Milan, a 'Clotilde,' composed by Coccia.

*Beethoven.*—Herr Graf von Goes of Vienna has presented an admirably cast bronze statue of Beethoven, by Pieleuthner, which he won in a raffle, to the Musical Society of that city.

*St. Petersburg.*—That noble piano-forte player L. v. Meyer, of Vienna, has recently been playing at St. Petersburg, and it would appear with some effect; for the Emperor of Russia presented him with a couple of brilliant rings, estimated to be worth eleven thousand silver rubles!

*Sacred Music in France.*—Adam, the celebrated composer of the opera of 'Le Postillon,' has written a grand mass, which was recently performed at the Church of St. Eustace in Paris, the composer himself presiding at the organ on the occasion.

*Paul.*—Another oratorio on the subject of 'Paul,' composed by Hein-

rich Elkamp, has recently been published by Breitkopf and Hartel. This work is made the subject of a long review, in a recent number of Dr. Fink's 'Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung,' which concludes as follows: "we can well recommend it to the lovers of music, and especially to societies for the practice of sacred music, as a work which contains much that is excellent and deserving of their consideration."—Mendelssohn's oratorio has recently been performed by the Cecilian Society of Frankfort on the Mayne, under the direction of Hiller, on two succeeding days, to the great delight of all who heard it.

*Reissiger.*—Herr Kapellmeister Reissiger of Dresden, has been nominated, by the Society of the Friends of Music in the Austrian states, an honorary member, as a mark of the estimation in which they hold his services in behalf of his art. His Majesty the King of Saxony has likewise been pleased to present him with a splendid snuff-box, as a mark of his respect and esteem for him.

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### PROVINCIALS.

The musical amateurs of Shefford and Dunstable, gave a Musical Festival in Woburn Church last Monday, which (says the *Bedford Mercury*,) was most respectfully attended. Lord and Lady Charles Russell were present,—the Miss Flowers assisted.

**BRIGHTON.**—On Saturday last, a Morning Concert was given here by Mr. Mc. Carrol. It was well attended. The principal performers were, Miss Clara Novello, (her last appearance in England, previous to her continental tour.) Signor Piozzi, Mr. Lindley, and Miss Mc.Carol, a little girl of twelve years old, who played Czerny's Fantasia on 'Le petit tambour,' and Weber's 'Concert Stück' with remarkable precision and effect, although both very difficult pieces.

Sir G. Smart was the conductor, and consequently there were neither delays, omissions, nor disappointments.

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### MISCELLANEOUS.

**LEIPSIC, October 7th.**—Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, decorated with the laurels gained on the Rhine, in London, and in Birmingham, was received with enthusiastic applause at our first subscription concert, on Sunday last, by his friends and the many judges of music now assembled here. He arrived only four hours before the concert was to commence.

**THE LEEDS ORGAN.**—Messrs. Hill and Davison, have in this instrument displayed a skill, science, and tone, in the manufacture of the organ, which we have never known excelled. The Wesleyans of Leeds, may consider themselves fortunate in the possession of an organ which all lovers of that instrument cannot but regret is about to leave the Metropolis. Messrs. Gauntlett and Pitman performed to a highly respectable auditory on Thursday, and Mr. Adams is engaged to perform on Friday Evening.

**MALIBRAN.**—*The Independent* of Brussels announces that a monument is about to be erected by M. de Beriot, to the memory of Madame Malibran, over her tomb in the Cemetery of Laeeken, after the design of M. Gufs, the sculptor and architect. It will consist of a rectangular chapel, rising into a

cupola, surmounted by a cross. A door of bronze, richly wrought in fretwork, will admit through the interstices of its ornaments, a view of the interior, discovering at the extremity a statue of white marble, representing the enchanting cantatrice as she appeared in life, in the fifth act of *Norma*. The chapel will be finished next summer, but the statue cannot be placed in it till the following year.

MISS CLARA NOVELLO, with her father, mother, and sister, left London on the 15th, in the *Batavier*, for Rotterdam, on her way to Leipsic. After having concluded her engagement at the concerts in that town, under the direction of Mendelssohn, she will also visit Berlin, Dresden, Munich, &c. and afterwards proceed to Italy.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN has expressed to Mr. Bean, the high satisfaction his playing Solo pieces on the Trombone, has given during the performances of the Band of the Carbinier Regiment at the Pavilion; Mr. Bean has accepted an engagement in this band for a short period.

BALFE'S New Opera is in active preparation at Drury Lane Theatre; it will be supported by the whole vocal strength of the house, including the composer himself.

BLAGROVE, the Violinist, intends to pass the winter months in Germany, to complete his musical studies.

OPERA BUFFA.—The arrangements for the ensuing season, which will commence on or about the 14th of November, are nearly completed. Sig. Catone and several of the company have already arrived. It is intended to increase the number of performers in the chorus; and the orchestra will be considerably augmented. Messrs. Mori, Lindley, Dragonetti, Tolbecque, Moralt, Harper, Barrèt, and Baumann, are again engaged. Benedict is conductor. Rossini's opera *L'Italiana in Algieri*, will probably be the first produced.—*Morning Chronicle*.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHAPEL, CHELSEA.—This chapel, which has been undergoing a thorough repair for some weeks past, was re-opened on Sunday the 15th instant, when was performed C. M. von Weber's first mass in G, for the first time (we believe) in any Catholic chapel, in, or about London. The solos were sung by Miss Beer, a 'pupil of Signor Crivelli,' Miss Jenkin, 'pupil of Mr. Bellamy,' and Mr. Farrier, assisted by the usual choir and a chorus, under the direction of the organist, Mr. Warren. There are many indications in this beautiful Mass of Weber's, of its having been composed about the time of the Author's celebrated Opera *Der Freyschütz*.

A musical festival is to commence at Vienna on the 5th of November, in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Society of the Friends of Music in the empire of Austria. The Creation of Haydn is to be performed. The orchestra and chorus will include from 700 to 800 performers.

MUSICAL NOTATION.—It is a curious fact, that while the ordinary hand writings of the natives of the various kingdoms in Europe, differ materially; that musical notes are written in nearly the same form, by all professors of the science throughout the continent, with the exception of some placing the dot before the stem, and others after it: in England the latter mode prevails, in regard to crotchets and quavers, but the reverse with minims, generally speaking.

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DELTA T. G. is postponed till next week.

MR. TURVEY'S communication is received, and with thanks.

MR. PIO CIANCHETTINI, ditto repeated. His opinion of the engraver is correct; but his terms are too much "above par."

M. B. (Paddington) probably next week.

"AN AMATEUR OF THE SPANISH GUITAR," as soon as we can find an opportunity.

"AN AMATEUR, F. WILSON." No musician refers to the paper our correspondent quotes, for an *honest* opinion. A public contradiction of that which all connoisseurs know to be a deliberate and wilful misstatement, would but lift the writer into consequence, by being deemed worthy of notice.

## WEEKLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

## PIANO-FORTE.

- Burrowes (J. F.) Martin Luther's and Portuguese Hymns, for 2 Performers ..... LONSDALE  
Chopin. Op. 28, Impromptu ..... WESSEL  
— Op. 25, 3<sup>me</sup> et 4<sup>me</sup> Livraisons d'Etudes ..... DITTO  
Chanson Andalouse. Los amores del Titano, by Burgmüller ..... CHAPPELL  
Czerny. Op. 441, Intro. and Vars. on "Senti tu," from Torquato Tasso ..... WESSEL  
— Op. 74, Rondoletto sur la cavatina de l'Italienne in Algeri ..... DITTO  
— Musical Greenhouse, Nos. 16 to 24 ..... DITTO  
— Op. 458, Rondino sur le Quail de Beethoven ..... DITTO  
— Ditto on "He leads a life of ecstasy" ..... DITTO  
— Ditto on "Poor heart, why so restless" ..... DITTO  
Duvernoy's Tu vedrai, Vivi tu, Ah come rapida, Cavatine de Nitocris, Amora che sorgeral, Air from Othello ..... OLLIVIER  
Galop from the favourite Ballet of Le Corsaire, arranged by François Hüntel ..... D'ALMAINE  
Italian Melodies and favourite Airs from the most celebrated Operas, arranged in a familiar style as Duets by T. Valentine ..... DITTO  
Les Fleurettes, No. 12. Waltz and Thema. G. Warne ..... WARNE  
Liszt. Op. 6, Grand Valse di Bravura ..... WESSEL  
Mercadante's La Testa di Bronzo, Book 1, Duet. W. H. Calcott MILLS  
O when do I wish for thee, arranged for Piano-forte by Henri Herz ..... D'ALMAINE  
Twelve Studies, calculated to ensure independence in the action of the Fugues, being a continuation of the celebrated new method for the Piano-forte, by Kalkbrenner ..... DITTO  
Weber (F. A.) Set of Quadrilles for Piano-forte ..... LONSDALE

## VOCAL.

- And is at length the lovely spirit fled? Ode for 3 Voices ..... OLLIVIER  
A coronet may gild thy blow, Song, Alexander Roche ..... D'ALMAINE  
Bird serenade. C. Stanfield ..... HOLLOWAY  
Broken wreath. Gillespie ..... DITTO  
By the clear waters. Roche ..... DITTO

- Days gone by. W. H. Nicholls .. KEITH  
How many loved and honored thee. Stanzas written by Miss E. Landon, on the death of Mrs. Hemans, music by Alex. D. Roche D'ALMAINE  
Jessy, by Spörle ..... KEITH  
My early days. G. A. Hodgson HOLLOWAY  
My flock all my pleasure. Song by Mme. Stockhausen ..... WESSEL  
Oh say not that hope ever dies. Music by Miss Smith ..... D'ALMAINE  
O! when do I wish for thee. Serenade to Ina ..... DITTO  
Oh thou alone. Ballad composed by S. C. ..... DITTO  
Panzeron. The Torch of Night, Notturmo for 2 Voices ..... WESSEL  
Sweet haunt of youth, written and composed by Linley ..... CHAPPELL  
The pilot. Song composed by J. Davy, Symphonies and Accompts. arranged by Bishop .. D'ALMAINE  
The tea-totalist. Comic ..... JEFFERIES  
The Spanish Soldier's Song, words and music by W. Williams ..... WILLIS  
Up to the forest. Cavatina, John Barnett ..... JEFFERIES  
Water Sprite. Miss Smith ..... KEITH

## FOREIGN VOCAL.

- Ah spiegar potessi, with Guitar Accompt. by Verini ..... CHAPPELL  
SACRED.  
Beethoven's five Sacred Melodies for 4 Voices. No. 1. Oh God, thy goodness. 2. God is my song. 3. I love my God. 4. Swiftly fades my life away. 5. The heavens proclaim him .... WESSEL

## CONCERTINA.

- Preludes, Modulations, and Cadences for Wheatstone's Patent Concertina, by Jos. Warren WHEATSTONE

## MISCELLANEOUS.

- By the clear waters, for Guitar, by Sola ..... HOLLOWAY  
Musard's Les Orangers, Les Grenadiers, Les Rosedais, Three Sets of Waltzes, arranged for the Piano-forte, with Accompts. for Violin, Flute, Flageolet, and Cornet-à-Piston, (ad lib.) by P. Musard ..... D'ALMAINE  
Pixis' 5th Trio, op. 129. Piano-forte, Flute, and Bass ..... WESSEL  
Rudolphus. Airs from Eagle's Haunt, for Brass Band, in 2 Books .....